GMA to serve until 2007 only, says Jose de Venecia

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Landing on Mars draws cheers, hugs and tears

'Just give me tea,' says 98-year-old survivor

Big chill in Erap-FPJ ties

He can win with or without me; I may not be needed any more–Estrada

Miriam may join GMA

GMA Senate slate ticket of reconciliation



Miriam on Poe: So new, so raw and so lost

Twins get gifts from strangers

'TRANSITION PRESIDENT'

Gloria until 2007 only, says JDV

Drinking, obesity cutting sperm count, says UK study



Second FRONTPAGE

15 killed, 50 hurt in Mindanao blast



Bare stand on power rates, poll bets dared

Leader of gang that killed Betti nabbed

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

'Jueteng' continues, say callers

Closer RP-US ties seen



QUICK ACTION











WHITE LADY

Out of the Closet

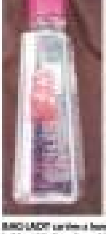


"THERE will always be someone who will pull you down," says young actress Judy Ann Santos. "It's how you handle criticisms that matters."

'I have to feel confident with what I wear so I can act well'











Fund lack hampers DENR reforestation effort

Temporary halt

Comprehensive plan

Vulnerable sites

Asians top Koran-reading tilt

Pinoy's assailant charged

Miriam may join GMA; John O, Biazon in

Miriam on Poe: So new, so raw and so lost

Drinking, obesity cutting sperm count, says UK study

GMA files CoC today with a show of force

OPPOSITION STANCE

Now, Loren gripes about high power cost

Big chill in Erap-FPJ ties



The WORLD

3 more GIs killed in Iraq

Britney weds childhood pal in Vegas, reports say



SPEARS

UK flight lands safely in US

Egypt rules out terror in Red Sea plane crash

WorldBriefs

South Asia starts summit

Parmalat probe

Seoul IBM corruption

4 Palestinians killed

INQUIRER OPINION



More contradictions

WITHERSTWHILE oppositionist Miriam Defensor-Santiago joining the administration's Senate slate, politics in the country has taken a turn for the absurd. We can expect more eye-popping, even hair-raising, developments in the next few weeks.

Before the administration's impossible contortions monopolize our attention, however, let us revisit the senatorial lineup of the so-called united opposition again. It is worth a second look, because its contradictions are serious enough to put its very existence as a political alliance into question.

EDITORIAL

In movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. and Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda, the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino have two survey-topping candidates. But their popularity cannot disguise the fundamental inconsistency that wrecks the opposition coalition.

A large part of the coalition, consisting mainly of those who support deposed President Joseph Estrada, wants the May 10 elections to be nothing less than a vindication of Estrada. Call this the redemption objective.

Officials closest to Estrada, and Estrada himself, have called for a Poe presidency for transparent reasons. Firm believers in the "weather-weather" theory of politics, they see a Poe administration as heralding a change in the ousted leader's political and legal fortunes.

A Poe presidency may not necessarily be the second coming of the short-lived Estrada administration, as some of the most fervent Estrada loyalists desire, but it will at the very least signal a radical change in the political weather.

Those who believe judicial decisions follow election returns hope that a Poe victory will result in a favorable decision; those who don't think the country's courts can be influenced hope that a Poe victory will lead to a presidential pardon.

It seems beyond doubt, however, that a contrary impulse helped moved Poe and Legarda to run together; they want to bring an end to the political divisiveness that has marked the last three years. Call it the reconciliation objective.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III, himself a controversial symbol of partisan politics, has called the Poe-Legarda ticket "a healing partnership." Legarda, who was one of the 11 senators who voted to open the second Jose Velarde envelope during Estrada's impeachment trial, thus paving the way to his ouster, justified her decision to partner with Estrada's close friend in terms of amity and healing. We can expect Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and ex-senator Ernesto Herrera, two KNP candidates identified as pro-impeachment, to hew closely to this line. (It is a line, we must note, that ex-defense secretary Orlando Mercado used when he joined the administration's Senate slate.) The time has come to leave the Estrada political crisis behind.

But the reconciliation and redemption objectives are not merely different; they are contradictory.

Another serious inconsistency that weakens the Poe-led ticket is the tug of war between alternative and traditional politics that has marked Poe's own appearances—or disappearing acts—in the last month and a half.

The actor has been praised for not appearing side by side with traditional, even discredited politicians. In none of his major political appearances did he surround himself with either the trappings of politics or with political operators: not when he declared he was running, not when he accepted the draft of the KNP.

But the reality is, politicians are working actively behind the scenes. In fact, the decision to leave politicians out of his (rare) appearances was based on a recommendation by politicians themselves. Having made a virtue out of necessity, the handlers of the very private candidate have seen the tactic work, and now want more of it.

This is not to say that all opposition politicians, especially those running for office, accept the restriction, or even understand it. Many have realized they have to hang on to Poe's coattails to make it; but they have also realized, if belatedly, that for them to win there must be somebody inside the coat.

So many kibitzers second-guessing FPJ

AS I SEE IT



Neal H. Cruz

[illegible]

A list of the things this country may look forward to over the next six years, from 2004 to 2010, under the administration of President Fernando Poe Jr. and Vice President Noli de Castro:

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

(To be continued)

Pinay nurses preferred

Political Tidbits



Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

Deliberate shading of the victim's face

Readers' Advocate



Raul J. Palabrica

Loren and FPJ

Kris-Crossing Mindanao



Antonio J. Montalvan II

Can Loren Legarda beat Noli de Castro?

Commentary

Dean Jorge Bocobo

Big business' stake in 2004 polls

Platform for FPJ to mull over

Abu Sayyaf no spent force

LETTERS

Why is the Palace silent on 'jueteng'?

Murder by society?

Changing spots, same leopard

Across the NATION

Bunye: GMA open to extended truce

Comelec proclaims new Nueva Ecija town mayor

Jumbo jet flies more travelers to Davao City

Probe on Lucena fire vowed



PRECIOUS GRAINS

Ex-mayor denies involvement in leader's slay

Friend

Widow

Military

ROUNDUP

4 die in car mishap

60 dogs saved

Principal found dead

Farm leader slain

Erratum





Landing on Mars draws ...

'Just give me tea ... '



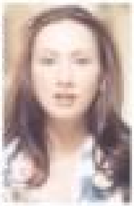


Twins get gifts from strangers

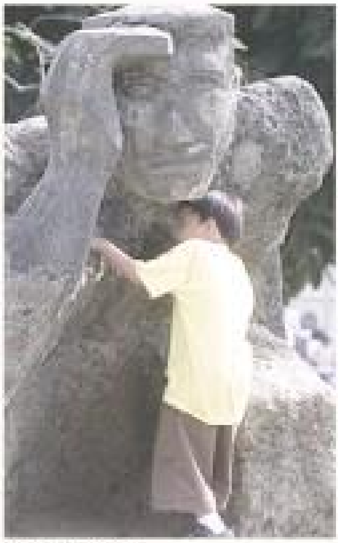
METRO

INVESTOR'S LAMENT

Bert didn't give financial report



Metro back to 'normal' as holiday break ends



'YOU LOOK, I'LL WATCH'

Kenneth Villa's long wait may soon be over



Key players

New Year's day drama

Candidates' rites

Gimmick

Rushing back

METROBRIEFS

Old woman run over in QC

Billiards hall fight; 1 hurt

RMHS Batch '71 reunion

Kenneth Villa's long wait may soon be over

Surgical plan

Kindness of strangers



DR. LOPEZ explains the results of the CT Scan done at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center on Kenneth to one of the boy's relatives.

The Daily Gospel

Supreme Court Doctrines



Snow blows hot as Sixers halt Spurs

SAN ANTONIO—Eric Snow scored 18 of his 20 points in the second half and Philadelphia, playing without Allen Iverson, beat San Antonio, 80-77, Saturday to end the Spurs' 13-game winning streak.

Brown 'misses' milestone

Hewitt, Molik rout Hungarian rivals



Freitas decisions Grigorian, seizes WBO 'light' title

Legendary Rose admits betting on baseball

Quest for Olympic boxing gold resumes

CLEAN LIVING





₱1.2-M carryover amount at stake in Santa Ana WTA

Adiong Cup listing ends today

SPORTS



Bright prospect for Suico crack at world crown

Paragua grabs No. 1 rank

By Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

IT WAS only fitting that the most bemedalled Filipino athlete in the last Southeast Asian Games is ranked No. 1 in his sport.



PARAGUA



NCR qualifying for Students' caging Jan. 8

Delasin back in limelight with Quirimit



TOUR Pilipinas champ Quirimit (above) and golf queen Delasin take different paths to victory.



A STATUS gap may be the only wall that divides golfer Dorothy Delasin and cyclist Arnel Quirimit. But on Jan. 9 at the Manila Pavilion, the two will stand side by side.

FRIENDSHIP TILT

Pinoy jungolfers take on Japanese

Magaway, Dandan lead march of faves

Goodbye, NBL; make way for NBC

How much 'lechon' does Mayor Vilma Santos eat?

BARE EYE



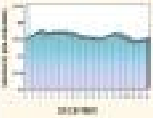
Recah Trinidad

BUSINESS

Editor Raul G. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Carolyn S. Mariano

Moody's seen downgrading RP rating

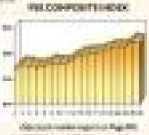
CURRENCIES



GOLD

Sluggish trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



BDO-Equitable PCI merger eyed

Safeguard duty on cement slashed

STOCK MARKET

Neda's yearend briefing - Part 2

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Horacio C. General

PLDT expects ₱1-B loss from landline business

DTI sees investment growth in '04

Borrowings pushed Oct. debt stock to ₱3.32T

Bangko Sentral urged to pay ₱6.4B in back taxes

Moody's seen downgrading ...

NOTICE OF RECEIVERSHIP

SMC PNEUMATICS PHILIPPINES, INC.

Taipannic compensation

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin



Safeguard duty . . .

Looking back and ahead

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito



The economy ten years ago

Why the economy will do better

Election spending

Improving fundamentals

PSE to raise brokers' payment to clearing, trade guaranty fund

By Doris C. Dumlao

BDO-Equitable PCI merger eyed

Cocktales . . .

ABS-CBN, Ayala salaries

Heard through the grapevine

Sluggish trading seen

Arts & Design LIFESTYLE



Grand and glorious beyond belief



THE SIGHT of Mumakil, eight-story beasts of war, is awesome



ARAGORN (Viggo Mortensen), uncrowned king of Gondor, leading his troops to battle

REVIEW

It is true what you've heard so far of "Lord Of The Rings: The Return of the King." It is a stupendous piece of filmmaking that fulfills and amplifies the promise of its two great predecessors.

Visual tricks





'The Return of the King' is a stupendous piece of filmmaking that fulfills and amplifies the promise of its two great predecessors



SAM: Astin as Frodo's loyal companion Samwise Gamgee gives a ferociously touching performance.



ARWEN (Liv Tyler) suffers exquisitely, torn between the pull of immortality and her all-too-human love for Aragorn.



Gollum (Andy Serkis), who turns from spiritedly endearing to menacing in the end

Grand and glorious beyond belief

From page C1

Pale shadow



MINAS Tirith, city of kings, capital of Gondor



KING Theoden (Bernard Hill) of the horse-lords of Rohan



FARAMIR (David Wenham) charges to a quixotic lost defense of the ruined city of Osgiliath, right outside the gates of Gondor



HONOR, courage, sacrifice and heroism to save Middle Earth



THE ROHIRRIM, rough and ready warriors of Rohan, gather to join forces with the last defenders of the city

Mag:Net presents yearend exhibit



"STRENGTH through Joy" by Manuel Ocampo

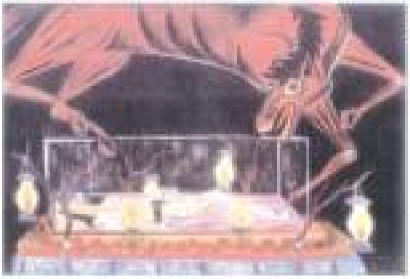
MAG:NET Gallery presents its yearend exhibition, "X-mas," which opened last Dec. 22 at its Makati site (G/F, Paseo Centre, cor. Paseo de Roxas and Sedeno St.). Curated by Nilo Ilarde, the show brings together small-scale works of the gallery's resident artists.



"LONG Fingered Brush," by Alfredo Juan Aquilizan



"MADONNA and Child," by Fernando Modesto





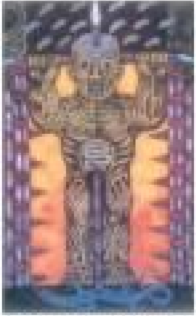
Images from the dark meadow

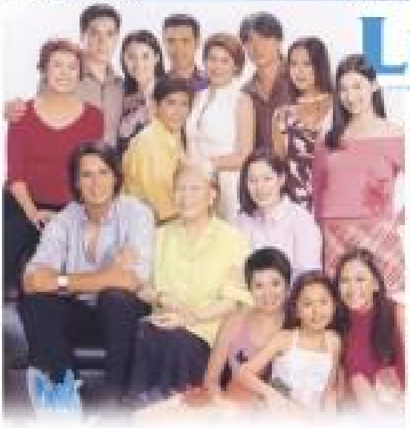


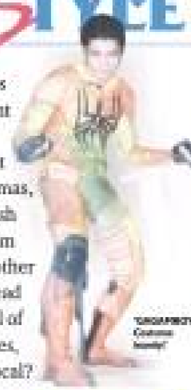
"CAPTAIN America," by Charlie Co

Images from the dark . . .

Bitter satire









Since Filipinos obviously want family entertainment during Christmas, why not abolish or reset the film festival to another date and instead have a festival of escapist movies, foreign and local?



Fantasia and carnival, not a film festival

By Lito B. Zulueta

THE 2003 Metro Manila Film Festival may have represented the strongest lineup of serious movies in recent years, but they are overwhelmed by the flagrant number of fantasy movies that makes the festival a carnival, not a showcase of the best of Philippine cinema.



[illegible]

Hardly the best

[illegible]



'FANTASTIC MAN': 'Lastikman' rip-off



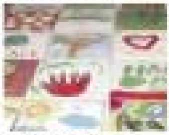
A FERRIS wheel-like installation is one of the intriguing features of the National Museum.



OVERSIZED rendition of the Braille alphabet for the blind outside the museum

Australia's monuments to past and present

Important landmarks Down Under give visitors abbreviated lessons in the country's history and culture



HAND-PAINTED tiles done by young guests of the Fairfield City Museum and Gallery carry peace messages.



THE MAIN hall and reception area of the museum have oddly shaped ceilings.



ODD shapes and vivid colors make the National Museum so different from most people's idea of a repository of historical treasures.

Fantasia and carnival, not a film festival